

Although the hazardous liquid and natural gas programs are structured somewhat differently to accommodate the differences between the two types of pipeline systems, both integrity management programs are designed to identify the best method(s) for maintaining the structural soundness (*i.e.*, integrity) of pipelines operating across the United States.

On January 9, 2002, RSPA/OPS began the integrity management rulemakings for gas transmission lines by proposing a definition of high consequence areas (See 67 FR 1108). We finalized the high consequence area definition on August 6, 2002 (67 FR 50824). On January 28, 2003 (68 FR 4278), we proposed a new 49 CFR 192.763 setting out integrity management program requirements for gas transmission pipelines affecting those areas. The comment period for this proposal closes on March 31, 2003.

The INGAA Foundation and AGA are conducting this workshop to give participants a better understanding of the proposed rule's requirements as they are intended to apply to gas transmission pipelines, and the process to comment on the proposed rulemaking. An OPS representative will give an overview of the proposed regulation and answer questions related to it.

The preliminary agenda for this AGA/INGAA sponsored workshop on Integrity Management for Natural Gas Pipelines is as follows:

#### February 20, 2003

**Pipeline Safety Legislation**—An overview of the recently passed legislation and its impact on the proposed integrity management program requirements.

**Overview of Proposed Regulation**—An OPS representative will discuss the intent and structure of the recently published proposed integrity management rule for gas transmission pipelines.

**HCA Identification**—An industry panel will discuss the high consequence area definition and the proposed refinement of that definition in the proposed integrity management rule.

**Risk Assessment**—An industry panel will discuss the risk assessment process detailed in the proposed rulemaking and compare it to present practices.

**Plan Development**—An industry panel will discuss the plan development as envisioned in the proposed rule and compare it to present practices.

**IMP Implementation & Data Integration**—Issues surrounding data integration and implementing the administrative process in a company will be discussed by an industry group.

#### February 21, 2003

**Mitigation & Repair**—An industry panel will discuss the proposed requirements for mitigation and remediation.

**Performance Metrics**—An industry panel will discuss performance measures for an integrity management program.

**Open Forum and O&A**—The audience will be able to query all the panelists and state their opinions during this session. Because this involves an open rulemaking, RSPA/OPS will include detailed notes of this workshop in the docket for the proposed rule. However, participants wishing to comment on the proposed rule should comment directly in the docket rather than rely on the notes of the workshop.

Issued in Washington, DC, on February 3, 2003.

**James K. O'Steen,**

*Deputy Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 030130026-3026-01; I.D. 121202B]

RIN 0648-AM30

#### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Halibut Fisheries in U.S. Convention Waters Off Alaska; Management Measures to Reduce Seabird Incidental Take in the Hook-and-Line Halibut and Groundfish Fisheries

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS proposes revisions to current regulations requiring seabird avoidance measures in the hook-and-line groundfish fisheries of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) and in the Pacific halibut fishery in U.S. Convention waters off Alaska. The proposed revisions to the current seabird measures are intended to enhance the current requirements and further mitigate interactions with the short-tailed albatross (*Phoebastria*

*albatrus*), an endangered species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and with other seabird species in hook-and-line fisheries in and off Alaska. This action is necessary to effect such regulatory revisions and is intended to further the goals and objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982 (Halibut Act), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the ESA.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by March 10, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be mailed to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668, Attn: Lori Gravel-Durall. Hand delivery or courier delivery of comments may be sent to the Federal Building, 709 West 9th St., Room 453, Juneau, AK, 99801. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the Internet.

Copies of the Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (EA/RIR/IRFA) prepared for this action are available from NMFS at the above address, or by calling the Alaska Region, NMFS, at (907) 586-7228.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kim S. Rivera, (907) 586-7424, or [Kim.Rivera@noaa.gov](mailto:Kim.Rivera@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The U.S. groundfish fisheries of the GOA and the BSAI in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) are managed by NMFS under the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska and the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (FMPs). The FMPs were prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) under the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) and are implemented by regulations at 50 CFR part 679. General regulations that also pertain to U.S. fisheries appear at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600. The Halibut Act, 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*, authorizes the Council to develop, and NMFS to implement, halibut fishery regulations that are in addition to, and not in conflict with, regulations adopted by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC).

This proposed action is designed to reduce the incidental take of seabirds in hook-and-line fisheries. The Magnuson-Stevens Act emphasizes the importance of reducing bycatch to maintain sustainable fisheries. Although seabirds are not included within the Magnuson-Stevens Act's 'bycatch' definition,